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UNITED  
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PALSY  
ASSOCIATIONS

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April 23, 1993

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20036



**Re: RADIO BROADCAST SERVICES; CHILDREN'S TELEVISION  
PROGRAMMING-- Children's Television Act (CTA)**

Dear Secretary and Commissioners:

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ALLAN I.  
BERGMAN  
Deputy  
Director

United Cerebral Palsy Associations, Inc. (UCPA) is pleased to make some comments in regard to the proposed rule and Notice of Inquiry as described in the *Federal Register*, p. 14367, March 17, 1993, which is to address how rules and policies might be revised to more clearly identify the levels and types of programming necessary to serve the educational and informational needs of children.

United Cerebral Palsy Associations, Inc. (UCPA) is a leading national not-for-profit health related association of more than 158 affiliates in 43 states. UCPA extends services to and advocates on behalf of more than 700,000 children and adults with cerebral palsy and similar disabilities to assist such individuals in becoming full community members.

UCPA is highly interested in the content and visual imagery found in television programming in general as well as the content and visual imagery found in programming that falls within the scope of the Children's Television Act. UCPA supports the current CTA affirmative children's programming obligation on broadcasters and the need to restrict the amount of commercial time that is placed in children's programs. Additionally, UCPA supports FCC initiatives to clarify that *the primary objective of qualifying "core" children's programming should be to meet the educational and informational needs of children* and suggests that some Guidelines be developed for the industry and program suppliers.

UCPA is concerned that there is insufficient programming that includes issues and images of children (and adults) that reflect the full range of disability found in the American population. The full range of disabilities includes vision, motor, hearing, learning and speech disability across the age spectrum. There are but a handful of shows during children's programming slots that could be considered to have addressed disability: on the publicly-owned networks "Sesame Street", "Barney & Friends" and "Mr. Rogers" have sporadically made representation. Occasionally, the networks have addressed disability issues in family shows and some companies, such as AT&T and Nynex, have included individuals with disabilities, typically wheelchair users, in their advertising. However, there are very few programs and shows that include "disability," either as a topic, a theme, or in background imagery. Additionally, as a lead or supporting character, children with disabilities are seldom included.

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## UCPA Comments to FCC on Children's Television Act

April 23, 1993

Page 2

UCPA believes that in order to better meet the educational and informational needs of all children, there needs to be both *an overall increase in programming time* designed to fit these needs as well as programming that *reflects the diversity of all children with regard to disability*. UCPA would hope to see more images, topics or themes about, or inclusion of, children with disabilities who are users of the following:

- augmentative & alternative communication devices, such as communication boards
- interpreters
- sign language
- glasses or other vision-enhancing devices (magnifiers)
- wheelchairs
- crutches
- hearing aids
- prosthetic devices such as artificial limbs
- other indicators of disability.

Additionally, images of children and adults who use public accommodations of disability would also meet the educational and informational needs of children. These include: -- curb ramps, brailled elevator buttons, light flashing indicators, adaptive switches to turn on/off lights, telephone adaptations such as speaker phones, headsets, modems, TDDs or TTs (text telephones), reachers, simple adaptations/fixtures for using office or home machines or appliances, adjustable furniture, adaptive computer software, page turners, lever door handles, pointing and aids such as headpointers and mouthsticks, alternative switches to control lights and elevator doors and other accommodations, electronic